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**THE NEXT MILLENNIUM CONFERENCE:  
Ending Domestic Violence.  
Safety, Confidentiality & Ethics  
August 30, 1999**

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BOS: mp

MOD: ---and I was recruited this morning to moderate this panel so it's a great pleasure for me, because I always like to meet people I don't know and I actually do not know our panelists today but I think we have a small enough group and enough time and I'm hoping that all of us will get to know each other a bit. I think what we can do is start out and we'll probably have quite a time for discussion at the end which I think is good because the topics that we're dealing with in today's session on ethics and confidentiality and safety and research are ones which I think are very much in evolution in our field. I don't think any of us exactly know the answers. I know we all grapple with these issues so let me just start out by introducing our first speaker, who is on my left, who's now tell me if I say your name right Berdava.

Ragina Berdava: Ragina Berdava.

MOD: Great. Ragina, we were talking before the meeting and she was telling me the she has been involved in the Battered Women's Movement for many, many years. Currently she is working for the school district in Chicago and is a Development Director that does fund raising but her personal interest is how to translate these skills to both of education, how to build resources for marginalized community groups and how to empower people through programs. So she

is going to talk to us a bit about her work and translating some of these ideas to the Battered Women's Movement.

RD: About ten years ago, in Chicago through a hot line that was established for Asians, we began to see a number of calls that were coming from parents, from children, and clearly showed that we needed some place where battered could go because most of the calls, 80% of the calls were of domestic violence. When you begin to network with main streaming we found that we were really going nowhere. So the very first thing that we did was a research project, it's the need assessment. And we had to go through the government files and then find out if we could do a survey. Surveying our own community and again our nation, Indian and the shelter was started by three of us. A major break through because at that point there was not even a recognition that there is domestic violence among Asian Indians. The shelter itself is an Asian Battered Women's Shelter and once the needs survey was done it was clear that our community was very afraid to even write on the survey that there is any emotional abuse, there is any physical abuse. So it was clear again that we have to do something that would make a difference. So I'm going to talk to you about the perspective of how researchers have come into \_\_\_\_\_, what are kinds of things that we have done, and I clearly as president for two and a half years and then

Executive Director for five years, found that as a minority organization a lot of people came because it was a readily available organization where people without any structure, people could come in and say I want to do some research and help others.

The second thing that we encountered with was very hard to face is that recognized leaders of the Asian community would call and say either my friend or my daughter is in school and needs the project and we are sending this person to your institution. Again because we were funded by individuals, you have to understand that \_\_\_\_\_ occurred in three years was recognized as one of the most innovative programs in the country and because the Ford Foundation Award for innovation programs. So knowing that, it was almost like a child walking and suddenly we got so much recognition that researchers also started coming. And when people started telling us that we're sending friends, students and some of the professors because funding was from individuals we began to entertain the people by saying come on in. What did happen is we would say we will not give your names but you can talk about statistics. That was one part. So it became like a data collection series. In the data collection it again sort of the collaboration part worked very well but in data collect as clear as that we wanted anonymity and that was one part. The second part was within the first year we

only had 15 articles, by third year we had 375 articles printed by media. So there was a lot of journalism school students that started to come and do research. And in that process not only did they interview our time but they began to write articles and so through the board, through the administration we had to establish a guideline as to what researchers can expect from us, what outcome would be there, what evaluation process will be done. It's a very simple way another researcher that I have worked, I mean I have been in school for a long time so we began to conglomerate and say what are kinds of needs are. So this is the part that I had visioned what research meant for us. The very first reason we allowed researcher to come is we felt that we couldn't build our own resources but if we could get people from schools and universities and from community partnerships we could do resources building.

The next one, it was very important for us that through research if we could be included in the mainstream. If we had the districts, if we had common ways to say that these are things that are happening we would be included in the mainstream.

The Third part that was very important for us is what are ways through research that we could get guidance and that became very important. Guidance for us meant that through different groups who were experts both in the university

setting as well as in different research areas, they could guide us as to how to look at our own world, at own women and one of the key things that I keep saying, how did we come about that was that we began to see that the women needed empowerment and through research because they were able to speak up to talk about the issues, they were gaining confidence and they could talk about it very clearly. So we saw that almost like women could speak up, women could become public relations people, women could become advocates for themselves and believe it or not initially women would not speak up but as with time we found that those women who had among Asians it's really a miracle if someone seeks help. So those women who sought out help over time began to say yes, we will speak. So we thought of this as a guidance \_\_\_\_\_, that just the researchers, just the collaboration will be able to make the women speak up, get outside intervention in terms of dialoging and be able to move forward.

The other part that we felt--our staff we had three important programs. One was the child visitation center which was run nine hours a day. The shelter was a 24 hour operation and the walk in services were there. Together we had only nine full time staff members. So we felt if researchers came and validated a lot of the information we would have a tremendous time in saying yes I need some more

and therefore we would get more funding. So that was an important crisis.

Another part was that validation would also be something that once we have it then other places, other Asian places were there was the whole movement had stated so when they would call us we would say yes we have this and you can do it.

The next part was even gathering information and facts. And that work was very important. Get all the information and facts and researchers help us. And clearly all the facts and information gave us the ability to demonstrate what the need was and it helped in the possible collaboration. The important part was that any kind of necessary information that was important was even part of what clients would give us. Yet there were five important researchers that came to our place and I have to say that some agencies get burnt out in the \_\_\_\_\_ ways. As an executive director who was committed to training and committed to volunteers and committed to making this agency grow, I found that researchers actually abused the \_\_\_\_\_ and abused the time and I began to understand how even as a shelter for battered women we ourselves can become abusers. And that's the part that's sort of been awakening and therefore I'm going to talk with you about some of the kinds of things that happen in collaboration and how \_\_\_\_\_ you have.

One reason just came in with a review \_\_\_\_\_ and this was supposed to be--you have to remember among all the Asian countries America is the leading agency--leading country in terms of \_\_\_\_\_ domestic violence but even in Basing it was clear that the government does not support, the research does not support domestic violence in the third world countries. So, this particular person came from India, was very clear about research and did the video. He promised that the person would be seen in the black--just as a silhouette and we found out that this particular video was shown all over the world and the person was seen in person. And the researcher who had collaborated with us violated all of us. That's the first time we actually put everything on paper and we made sure there was a contract and for us that was very important. To have a contract, a contract that had legal ramifications. We were then able to get a lawyer and be able to do that part. In terms of even the information, the researchers had actually stayed \_\_\_\_\_, at the shelter and again we allowed the person to stay in the shelter because we had so little staff that this became like something, yes the researcher stayed we will have an around the clock person. So you have to understand what happens to agencies that are small, that are minority run and what kind of ramifications take place.

The second researcher was somebody who was doing her PhD and

she came in from a housing background, I mean she was trying to think about or architecture background and she was talking about can space or what amount of space is needed. And how clients should be working within that space. What happened is in her interaction with the client, she began to give them ideas and concepts that when she left we almost had a revolution in the shelter saying we must have this, we must do this. Now with limitations you can't provide all of that. We had met all the health needs and the zoning and the coding and all those needs but we, you know, from an architect perspective it was very different and that's the kind of pain you have to understand if you're under staffed and you don't have people who are going through all the questioning that is happening in the place, do you really expose your women or do you really protect your women. I mean the who purpose of research is not to reveal, it is really to say yes, these are things that are happening but I will protect--I mean domestic violence--the shelter means that we protect our clients totally. So that was the second experience.

The third experience was somebody who wanted to do a child study and we looked through the interview process what they were going to do, how they were going to do it and we approved it and by this time we had all the paper work done so it was something that was possible. And in that process

the person who happened to have a legal background began to give information to the--sort of ideas and papers to some of the non-custodial parents. And the non-custodial parents started taking action. And see that again became \_\_\_\_\_.

So these were three of our failures in terms of not having the proper set up. But what resulted from that is we began to say when we have researchers, when we have interns, when we have volunteers, we need to think about who do they benefit. So when we have researchers how do they benefit us. So we felt that from a mental perspective our allegiance was to be individually served at the time, to the community that we served and for that we needed information. We also felt very strongly about the staff and the organization and the staff again because the pay is so little we had some Masters people but the pay is low, so you begin to train people from the community who are very accommodating. So training and research was very minimal. So we had to find the bridge between the staff training and the collaboration with the researchers. The granting agencies we thought we had all the data, now that we had all these researcher giving us and we moved into the granting group and we would talk about it. But what we found is that we would get some money and we could never put anything in research. So it was more staff salaries and things like that. So it was very, very important to see how that was

going to benefit. Then the clients themselves they began to say in this collaboration were the clients clear about what their issues were? One of the articles that was printed through the \_\_\_\_\_ School, which is from Northwestern, the writer actually promised that she would not use the name of the client, would not use the exact story but would camouflaged. She not only wrote it but it was also printed in different papers and the husband, the abuser actually sued us and he was so well connected, that's the part you have to understand, he was so well connected with the community that the community came back to us saying what is happening. So research is a great thing but at the same time not having a structure became difficult. The other part is I never was never, never committed to training the individuals at any time we had four training sessions or the hour training for domestic violence. And in that training there were always some people who would be affiliated with schools and would say we come for the training and we want to do research. So while they are wanting \_\_\_\_\_, they were also doing some research and yet not all of them were clear about what they were doing. So in some ways volunteers use our premises, use the facilities and use our clients to go back to say things that in the school system that did not stroke right.

Yesterday I had attended a conference here with Michele

Chino and I don't know if any of you were there. But she had also done research with the American Indian Community and her guidelines--she is a researcher and she allows me to use that, so I'm going to talk to you about some of the things that she went through and these were my experiences but connecting what do researchers expect and what do community people expect, especially in a minority community. So these are some of the questions that you need to think about if anybody come for research. Who are the people who want to do the research? Do you know of their work? Are they concerned about the survivors? Do they have sensitivity about the survivors? What past studies have they done? So anybody can call and say I'm doing research, think about that. Then the next thing you have to understand, who will their project benefit? Is it something that graduate students are doing because there's nobody around and I think \_\_\_\_\_ became something like nothing else. There was not a single Asian group that had to be studied in Chicago at that time. So now we have Chinese American, \_\_\_\_\_ Korean American, Women in Need. So there are some groups that have a part of it but at that time there wasn't so the question came where we really benefiting the graduate students to get them the experience into the social services or we were exposing our down trodden women to let them have practice in research. So

that's the part you have to understand.

The next one is are researchers willing to have the student trained on domestic violence by a battered women's program? So they get more to see what is there and what are the interviewing techniques or are we there to get the researchers to blame the survivors and see a lot of times researchers would come and talk some of them short term, some of them long term and when they left the women fell back to the level where they had come, the trauma got reactivated, and therefore, we had to do a lot more counseling and that's the part you have to think about, researchers come and do it but some of the things that they say may activate emotional trauma and the whole experience once again.

The next question you will have me to ask, how will individual battered women benefit? Will they be paid for the interview? There was not a single time that we were paid and you need to think about that when researchers come they have their \_\_\_\_\_, but how does the agency benefit? Consequent to whatever advocacy, Stephanie Regal from University of Illinois, I did some work with her. She a psychologist. Now in the grand \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ it is very clear that they will say any of the shelters should be also getting part of the money. And that to us is very, very important. That somewhere is agencies are

participating, giving their staff, giving their time, protecting their clients in whatever possible, that should be done. Is the research trying to exhume some stupid idea that you all ready know is useless and sometimes that, you know, so many people would come in and I would say these are the wasted costs. They would keep talking, oh hey this is your great idea but not mine. So think about how does that work. You do not let researchers come in just because they are there. You think about what your needs are, what your research part is and that to us was very helpful. Again I'm just saying by trial and error we have learned a lot. How do those that are doing the research have asked questions of battered women and would it be helpful to know how the approach people. Some people are not at all sensitive, only sensitive to the people that they're using in the survey or the people that they are using for interviewing or the stats that the want to from through that. Have those doing the research ever ask battered women advocacy programs, what it would be helpful for them to know. Believe it it has been an experience. So few people ask what would you like to know and can we fit into that? Will the practice be respectful of the confidentiality of battered women. If taped, what will happen to those tapes? What measures are taken to insure anonymity? Have the interview signed confidentiality agreements? Do they understand that might

come into a shelter and meet their sister-in-law and what than? Again when you have an Asian community it always like the talk about it outside and this has been a very strong point of our. Will the process be respectful of the privacy of battered women? Are there options for women not to answer certain questions. When you are battered and when you are low, when you have low self esteem and somebody asks you questions nine time out of 10 you will give the truth, you will not say I will not answer. And Asians definitely they'll show you the smile at every time you meet. We come out with that image that we are very happy people, that there's no problems. So when somebody ask these questions, you do not wash your dirty linens, so you begin to say, oh yes, this is there's and there is never a no there. So even training the women to say no in a research project was a challenge for us. What would happen if a battered woman discuss committing a crime in the interview, would the interview report? Now that is something that we really added to our papers because a lot of times we did not get what some of the things that had come out in the interview and they may have related to that interview better than even one of the staff members, so that came should that have been reported and how should that have been reported? And does it really go int the client's file? What would happen if the interviews were requested under the Freedom of

Information Act? What would happen if the person doing the interview subpoenaed into the court? Would she maintain confidentiality and again when researchers were following some of the women round the clock they not only went to the court, they went to all kinds of systemic \_\_\_\_\_ that we have taken when counseling the women. So the kinds of things are they interacting properly? What practical application to build the research have? Is it going to help to do our job better? And as the Executive Director I thought it would help but with these certain instances you kept saying did it really help? Our job was to promote safety. Our job was to promote justice. Our job was to promote economy. And really restoration of the survivors, restoration of their strength to say that yes the \_\_\_\_\_ differences, the values, the institutional practices all of them condoning violence. So we felt that we were doing it very clearly but we need to think about it.

The next part is very important. Is there a profit motive? And if so if you can establish that when researchers are coming for outside what is the profit motive. So that part had to be done and are we willing to properly credit the Battered Women's Advocacy Organization. Believe it or not many times we weren't even given credit, whether it was an individual or an organization or for \_\_\_\_\_. So, the question comes as a community we wanted understanding. We

wanted the respect for our participants, we want some facts and information that would lead to solutions, that would lead to participating collaborations and if that is not what researchers want and researcher is part of mission is very much a global understanding, a participation and that meant an obligation. So the question comes do we meet, do we bridge that? The other part is that we as researchers always found--I mean we as a community organization felt through research we would be able to educate the communities. We would make community liable and be involved through the researcher into taking almost a proactive and an active role and the question was can we build trust with the researchers? Can we develop a common frame work? Can we develop responsibility and accountability? Can we balance this reciprocity, this whole process of going together and in that reciprocity is are there self interests and help interventions and are they really proper? In terms of ethical issues we then found certain things that were clear that we had to put time and energy in it and I'm just going to read out to you the exclamations. One was to take time, I mean it was clear that we had to take time out, sometimes even 10% of our direct time when there was such an out pour of people coming for our research and so taking out that time to find out what's needed, what's the support and how do we relate to that? So that time was very essential and

not in retrospect, if there was a volunteer that was a researcher we should have given that as a pro bono activity, that person would do as a researcher. The second is we control the research project and not be controlled by them by the universal appeal. The third part is release of stories without names and in that context you could see what are the ethical issues in terms of that and how do they make that up? I mean it was like an out pour of a new concept that women in the Asian community are battered and it almost became a sensationalized. So through research our organization became a sensation outside, not only in this country but outside. So this question is how do we help with that? Not to press negative images. I know up to now what I'm talking about this negative relationship with researchers, so the question comes that they should be not taking our work and saying--it's almost like making fun of our women and making negative concepts so the images take the reality by not make it so down that we cannot--I mean don't you move it out of the context that this is happening. Like there's always this notion that when we came from India that people who go from this country and take pictures and they talk about slums in India, the poverty in India, there's also something there that is the culture. The same way when they come to a shelter don't talk about only the negative through your research. Informed consent process,

it must be a relationship. It is not something like the sign a paper, you need to follow that up. Access to sensitive information that for us was very, very--I mean concept that had to be done right and not having enough staff sometimes that sensitivity was not there. The confidentiality and anonymity that all of you know what it is and believe it or not if you were a battered woman, if you're a survivor and someone talks about you outside, it puts you down in the hole and to come out of it is very difficult. It's almost like what have I said, what have done?

And the last part of ethical issues is really the perception, risk and benefits. And we have to think about what to researchers offer? What are the risks and benefits? I have put this just to talk about, these are the \_\_\_\_\_ maybe if you just hold it. So if you think of types of research you have the bench marking--so if you think of research on a continued like that you have the bench marking which is really a data collection. The second is resource allocation. The third is public relations and the fourth is program development. So these were ways that I say researchers join, coming to us. And these were all our stake holders, so when we fel that someone was benefiting we felt yes, we can go ahead with it. And so by using this model we felt somewhere one group benefited and that drew us

into research. But you need to be very, very clear where that research is and how it is done because it could make a tremendous difference. And one needs to also think about when the--trust is such an important part in language and cultural specific research. You need to think about how that whole concept of translation works. How our body mechanism, how ways of saying are misinterpreted, especially in a research project. You know, I may say I don't know but it's not I don't know in terms of what you're saying, I'm saying I can't explain it in the most critical way. So in that sense think of all of those issues and you'll find that when you go into a research project, into an institution that is minority run, think about many other areas before you're saying I'm exploring and I'm doing this. Well time is up and we will take some questions later. So thank you.

MOD: Unless anyone has a burning issue right now I think it might be good to go on to our second speaker who will be speaking about some of the same issues I think but from the perspective of a researcher and then we could perhaps have some collective conversation about this. Our second speaker is Sandra Beman. She is an associate professor at the University of Minnesota School of Social Work. She's been working for the last 14 years doing research on child welfare, child maltreatment and violence against women and I have agreed to do her overheads so why don't you probably

sit there and I think I will sit if that's okay. It seems like we're small enough and we're not using the podium.

Sandra Beman: What I'm going to be speaking today is not only ethical issues but also some of the methodological issues and how those two concerns come together often in research and especially in research on sensitive issues to create dilemmas that we need to resolve and I'm going to be speaking about particularly in an area of research that I've been working on for the last about three and a half to four years with Jeff Eddelson at the University of Minnesota which is research on the overlap of child maltreatment and violence against women and some of the unique issues that raises for us particularly ethically in doing research and protecting safety and confidentiality.

Over the last few years there's been a growing interest in this issue of the overlap of child maltreatment and violence against women and what I am going to be talking about today is really from the perspective of a researcher but a researcher who has been conducting research in community based settings, who has an ongoing relationship with several domestic violence agencies in our area and some of the ways that we've come together as researchers and practitioners and service providers to conduct research on domestic violence in an ethical manner. I think this area of research is very important and it's an area of research

that's has been somewhat limited. We've only begun to do research on it. More and more we hear about families where there's both child maltreatment and violence against women that we don't know a lot about it, we don't know much about the best way for service providers and that means from child protection agencies to domestic violence shelters to police and health care should best work with those families. And in trying to learn more about those issues we really need to use a variety of data collection strategies including some of the things that Ragina was talking about in terms of using data that exists but also talking to women, talking to children, talking to battered and that's really where some of these issues begin to come up in terms of doing ethical research. And it really requires a lot of care in eliciting that information and safe guarding it and keeping it confidential and in not posing additional risks to the women and children who are part of the research that we're doing. So I'm going to provide some background on some of the research that we've been doing. I'm going to tell you about some of the difficulties and dilemmas that we've encountered and how we resolved them. And we started buy saying that there really isn't one right answer and there's not just one way, I think, to conduct research ethically, so I'm going to be talking about what we've done to try to resolve these issues. And then make some recommendations for future

research.

Over the last three years Jeff Eddleson and I have been involved in this research and it's described in the overhead. I also have hand outs that might be useful. It has the overhead so you can kind of follow along. In our first study we had two phases of research. We wanted to explore differences in families where there was both domestic violence and child maltreatment and families where there was no none domestic violence but there was child maltreatment and we were looking at family characteristics, service characteristics and response or particularly the child protection system to these families.

In the second phase of that first study we did focus group interviews with domestic violence advocates and child protection workers and particularly asked them about the ways in which they've been able to successfully collaborate to work with families where there was both child maltreatment and domestic violence.

Then the next phase of our study which is the current research that we are doing now we're hoping to again expand what we know to inform service providers about families where there is domestic violence and child maltreatment. So how those two types of violence co-occur, how service providers respond to those families and how we can improve the way that they respond.

These projects together have involved a lot of different data collections strategies and have raised different issues that I'm going to talk about in terms of ethical issues. Some of those kind of data collection strategies have included analysis of administrative case data and that came from a local Police Department and it was linked to data within the child protection system and that was on 172 families, 95 that experienced both child maltreatment and domestic violence and 77 were there was no known domestic violence in a form of a domestic assault report but there was know child maltreatment. It also included semi-structured focus group interviews as a research technique with child protection workers and battered women's advocates and that included some group interviews with child protection workers only, group interviews with battered women's advocates only, and the some interview where we brought those two groups together and conducted focus groups. Then during that second phase of study we've done two different kinds of interviewing. First where some structured telephone interviews with a 114 battered women around the U.S. in four different cities, in Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, Houston and Santa Clara County in California and we asked them about their experiences of violence, their child's witnessing of violence and the response of informal support and formal assistance of help. And that's being

followed by our current base of study which is in depth, qualitative interviews with 25 women. One of their children over the age of 12 and when possible and I'll tell you again about how we made these decisions on their male partners. So those are the different kinds of research projects that we were doing and I just want to give you a little bit of background from the literature on some of the methodological and ethical issues that other researchers have identified in the field of family violence. And again this comes from research on domestic violence, research on child maltreatment, research on sexual assault or trauma but there really hasn't been anything written about the research on the overlap in other words research where families are experiencing both child maltreatment and violence against women. So I just want to briefly--

(End of Side A, Tape #204)

--how is domestic violence defined, how is the family defined and often these definitions are different for legal purposes, for social service purposes, for clinical purposes and than for scientific purposes. For example if you think about what's child abuse or child maltreatment it can be defined in terms of endangerment and therefore it focuses on the parental behavior or parental intent. It can be defined in terms of demonstrable harm and therefore looks at the child, the outcome on the child. So those are two very

different ways of looking at it.

Legal definitions, look at harm rather than endangerment and then look at the intent of the parent. Social service definitions really are looking at the risks to the child. They're not so much interested in who caused it but who's going to protect the child in the future. And those definitions, if you were to rely on the social service definition or may on a case by case basis so there's not always consistency and therefore that's not always a good proxy for whether or not child maltreatment occurred. Similarly if you think about how domestic violence is defined, I think all of us are aware of some of the controversies about whether it's any kind of marital violence for example, whether it's violence in the context of a structure of power relationships and gender relationships. Whether acts of violence within a family context is considered domestic violence. So those are real issues in terms of who would be in a research study. In addition how is the family defined becomes an issue. Does it have to be a legal or biological relationship. The person's presence in the household is that enough to define somebody as a family? So these things that seem like straight forward terms are not always straight forward. Another methodological issue has to do with sampling, with recruitment and retention of participants in research and

sources of data all of which are kind of related. So it's difficult to recruit large representative samples particularly when you're gathering data on sensitive topics and there are questions about the best way to recruit people for research, from the community for example, from social service agencies, public records and for example public records often suffer from what we call surveillance bias in that people who have contact with public service agencies, particularly public aid, etcetera tend to over represent low income families. Same with child protection services data tends to over represent low income families. So if we're saying that represents the population of people experiencing domestic violence how is that representative of the reality of domestic violence? In addition, children who receive services within child maltreatment agencies tend to and especially in urban areas represent to more chronic cases of child maltreatment because child protection agencies are over burdened with people coming in and they take only what they consider to be the highest risk cases. So again you have a very different kind of child maltreatment if you use public \_\_\_\_\_ welfare agencies. And a lot of people have talked about, for example, going to shelters and domestic violence agencies as opposed to a community sample of women who may be experiencing violence, represent this certain, perhaps a certain time in the progression of

domestic violence or perhaps people in greater need who turn to a shelter. So again it's question of who you're representing.

And then finally how do we recruit families for research with out coercion and that's some of what Ragina was just talking about and I'll talk some more about that in a minute. And that's particularly an issues when families are involuntarily receiving services, so for example through child protection agency. Some measurement issues, these primarily focus on the best way to collect accurate data. For example should it be through self report and does that under represent or over represent the existence of violence and there's people who feel different ways about that and both ways about that. If you're using a survey are you relying on people's memory and therefore have a different perception of what the reality might have been. And then what's the best approach to collecting self report data. Is it better to do it in an anonymous written survey? Is it better to do it in a in person interview? And these are all controversies that people have to resolve on when they're making decisions about doing research.

And finally the last thing on there is just research design issues and that has a lot to do with whether you take a cross sectional group of women, whether you try to follow women over time. And then who should be included in

comparison groups is you have comparison groups how do you define for that should be? Okay. Those literatures also raise legal and ethical issues in conducting research on family violence. And, in fact, part of what end up informing researchers best decisions about methods, how to recruit samples, how to collect data, have to do with these underlying legal and ethical issues and the dilemmas that they raise. These include mandated reporting of child maltreatment and it's relationship to confidentiality of data. There are questions about what the limits and obligations of mandated reporting in the context of research are and the reporting was varied from state to state. What's the relationship between confidentiality certificates which are the certificates that a researcher can get--it says that data is protected and couldn't be called into court. There's some question, it's never been tested whether or not that could ever happen. And whether those actually relieve researchers from their mandated obligation to report child maltreatment, and especially for researchers like us who are social workers we have a professional responsibility and requirement to report child maltreatment. Even if it's not legally mandated that you report, is it ethically okay not to report. So those are some of the issues that people have to deal with and that has to do with whether it's ever okay to collect anonymous data on domestic

violence or child maltreatment? That's the ethical obligation to report.

The confidentiality of participation in a study is another issue and especially when you're recruiting through social service agencies does that somehow identify those women and in particular if services are provided in within a larger agency by going to agencies and recruit are you identifying them to other clients, to other people in the agency by recruiting them in your study? And overall a major ethical issue is balancing the risk and benefits to participants and that's something Ragina mentioned too. When we considering in making decisions about recruitment and data collections, how do we balance risks and benefits. So for example in recruiting subjects is payment cohesive? Some people thing paying people is a cohesive issue or is it reimbursement for time and effort? If you're recruiting from a social service study do people receiving services feel obligated to participate because the people they are working with are telling them about the study. And then there's always the risk of psychological distress and particularly an issue with research on domestic violence for both women and children. The kinds of issues that are raised in a research interview can really bring a lot of distress to women. And then finally issues of how we obtain informed consent and again as Ragina said that's a process not a form that

people sign. There's a process of providing informed consent. And particularly when you are interviewing children, can children give consent or can they give assent and how do you know that they are voluntarily participating? A lot of these issues that I have mentioned often come into conflict. Maximizing one may minimize another and thus they present these dilemmas that have to be resolved in the research process and that often involves an assessment of a researchers value and making very explicit what they're going to prioritize in the research process.

Now I'm going to tell you specifically about some of the dilemmas that we've been faced with in our research and how we resolved them. As we've been doing this research we've encountered many of these issues. What's the best way to collect valid data and again part of our responsibility as researchers to the community, to service providers is to collect accurate data. So that again often is the dilemma between being safety and confidentiality aware but also wanting to gather data that really is valid, is authentic, is going to provide people with useful information. What's our legal responsibility to report child maltreatment? That was an issue because we were interviewing women about their children's witnessing an involvement in domestic violence. And again many of these dilemmas stem from conflict between our methodological and research scientific goals and our goals

to conduct research in the most ethical and sensitive manner and again bringing many of our values from our own discipline of social work. We really decided that we wanted to maximize both whenever possible but the issues of ethics always would take priority and any time we were faced with an issue we would sacrifice the scientific value of our research to do research in an ethical manner. So that is really what guided us. And the dilemmas that I'm about to talk about focused on three major areas defining the overlap of child maltreatment and domestic violence, subject recruitment and securing accurate data on sensitive issues. With this overriding principle minimizing risk of participation to women and children.

One of the methodological issues that arose in all of our studies and really had implications for recruitment and data collection was how we were going to define the overlap of child maltreatment and violence against women? Who would be our sample of families in whatever research we were doing? And in the case of our first study there were a variety of issues that arose related to relying on existing data which is what we were focusing on in that study. Because we were interested in exploring the child protection system's response to families where the woman was also a victim of adult domestic assault. We needed to find some way of identifying families where there was both known child

maltreatment and known domestic assault and we knew we wanted to gather information from the child protection system to get a sense of--but we also knew that child protection systems don't traditionally ask women about domestic assault or don't do it in a systematic way. And therefore it would be difficult to identify by families within their systems who are also experiencing domestic assault and this really relates to one of the larger issues of our study on the overlap which is that we know that child protection agencies work with mothers who were abused but they don't always know it and they don't always know what to do about it if they do know it. And in women's programs often deal with mothers who's children are abused or being maltreated in some way but they don't always deal directly with services to children. More and more agencies do but they're traditionally been focuses on services to women and there often legitimately often very concerned about involved child protection services and sometimes many advocates have told us that they won't even enter into a discussion or questions about the child witnessing because they don't want to be put into the position of knowing about any child maltreatment might be going on. So we decided that the best way to identify these families was to begin with an agency where at least theoretically both domestic assault and child maltreatment are reported and not with the police department

hoping that they can identify families where there was some kind of violence going on. Now some of the difficulties with that solution are one, that their data is report based, it's incident based, it's not family based. So we asked them to link on a domestic assault report the victim's name, the female victim name to the mother of the child abuse report's name. None of this information on name or confidentiality data was released to us by the way. It went directly to the child protection agency which all ready had information on these families because the police reported to child protection services. So the limitations of that data and of identifying families in that way is it a bias sample? Does it over represent low income families who may be more likely to have police involvement and child protection service involvement when those two forms of violence are occurring. Are the two groups of families really different? In other words just because police were not aware of domestic assault does that mean there was no known adult domestic assaults occurring.

In our focus group study the issue arose of what definition of the over lap to use when we characterize cases for the workers to talk about. We want to ask advocates and ask child protection workers about their practice with families where both types of violence were occurring. And as we all know there are multiple ways in which the over lap occurs.

It takes many forms. It can be a child who is physically abused by the same man who is abusing his mother, his or her mother, whether or not it's the child's father. It can be a child who is accidentally injured during a domestic assault against his or her mother and then is brought into child protection. A child who witnesses domestic assault and suffers some kind of emotional or psychological harm and in more and more state by the way that's becoming a part of what the definition of child maltreatment is and that's an issue we all have to deal with in this field. Or it can be a child who is somehow neglected, unsupervised in some other way suffering from maltreatment due to the domestic assault of his or her mother. And what we found was that depending on which of those kinds of overlap we were talking about, workers had different responses to how they work together. So for example, Battered Women's Advocate said if they refer a family to child protection services where the male batterer, who is also the abuser of the child was the legal father of the children, they usually work together pretty successfully. They were able to have a good working relationship with child protection. However, if we were talking about cases where women, and especially--this is what our focus group participants told us--especially women of color who are reported to child protection services for failure to protect or some other kind of neglect allegation

related to her own victimization, than the nature of that collaboration or generally lack of collaboration was very different. So depending on which of those definitions we use we got a different response.

In our interview study the question was how to cast the widest net that we could in order to capture the multiple ways in which these two forms of violence co-occur. And we really wanted to understand more about that, whether the incidence of child maltreatment were related to the incidence of the adult domestic assault, whether they were separate incidence, etcetera. As in many research projects we had a good working relationship with several domestic violence agencies and that seem a good place within our collaboration to locate women to interview. We knew that the child protection agencies weren't very good at identifying battered women and we also knew that domestic violent agencies, battered women's agencies weren't always aware of child abuse or child maltreatment that was going on. And at first our goal was to interview formerly battered women so who had been receiving services for a while, who also had involvement with the child protection system as indicators of both kinds of violence. And that really raised the question of whether or not child protection service involvement is a good indicator of child maltreatment. And if so, is the type of maltreatment that

substantiated by the child protection agency an accurate representation. So for example in the cases and probably many of you know women who have dealt with this issue of women being told that they were failing to protect their children because the child was physically harmed by a batterer, now that's going to be know to the child protection service agency as a type of neglect when in fact it's physical abuse of the child by a different adult. So in the end what we decided to do was to kind of widen our net and just interview women who were victims of adult domestic violence and who had children living in their household with them with during the violence. Now that lead me to talk about subject recruitment which is the next overhead. And this is really an area where priorities in terms of methods or the scientific value of our research came together with ethical priorities to really create some dilemmas for us. And again the major issues was how to recruit the most representative sample of women without posing risk to those women or their children for participating. And here I'm going to talk about some of the experience from our telephone interview study. We, as I said, decided that through some of the collaborations that we all ready had with domestic violence agencies, that we would recruit women through those agencies and we were working with agencies in four different U.S. cities. And

again part of the reason that we wanted to do that was because we wanted some indication or evidence that the woman was all ready linked with formal services. We were going to be interviewing her about very sensitive issues and we wanted her to all ready be linked with a social service setting. And we also asked agencies in recruiting women for this study to identify women who they believed were not in immediate crisis or in immediate danger to be interview, again because we wanted to lessen the emotional distress to her of our interview. Still workers in many of the agencies had some concerns. Many shelters and domestic violence agencies and the workers within them felt very protective of the women who were receiving services. They were particularly concerned about the risk to her if she revealed that her child had been maltreated in any way during the domestic assault. And that's something I'm going to talk about again in a minute. And the workers had I think had varying degrees individually of commitment to the research. So all of the agencies were committed to being involved but that doesn't always translate into commitment at the level of individual workers who are really the ones who are going to provide information about the study to the women. And I think workers had varying degrees of commitment to research in general in whether or not it was an important issue and that affected their willingness to refer women to the study

too. In terms of incentives we wanted to supply reimbursement to women. Our values were that we were reimbursing them for their time, for their commitment and their involvement and we wanted to send the message that here time was valuable for participating, so we wanted to pay and did pay a \$20 stipend to each woman involved in the interview. And in addition because we were involved in four different agencies, paid each agency a stipend for their efforts in terms of recruitment and also eventual payment of the subjects because that also occurred through the agencies. So we, as part of our research grant, identified a certain amount of a grant that went to each agency for participation in the research. I think it was \$500 which was not a lot but it was about as much as we could get the foundation to commit at that point.

Securing accurate data on sensitive issues, and again this is a point at which we were balancing scientific priorities and ethical priorities. How could we collect the most valid and reliable and authentic data, data that has real meaning to the community and consumers of our research about the experiences of families when we're asking them about sensitive issues which could lead to risks for them. Could pose risks to both women and children. In terms of validity and reliability of our data in our survey interview, these telephone interviews, we focused on interviewing only women

about her experiences and about her children's exposure. Now again that captures only her perspective on the issue and I all ready discussed earlier some of the issues that have been raised in the literature about under reporting and over reporting of domestic violence. And particularly some past researchers found that both battered women and batterers tend to under estimate their children's exposure. Tend to under estimate the amount that the children knew about the abuse. But again because we were doing telephone interviews we were limited to only interviewing the women. In our indepth interviews which we're just beginning to do, we are interviewing a child of the women who's over the age of 12 and also male partners if she's willing to identify him and ask--not ask him but identify him to us and have him be interviewed. And of course I think our data is limited by that restriction but again it was an ethical decision to interview only women.

Two ways that we've tried to lessen the risk to women in terms of data collection, one is in terms of interviewer skills and sensitivity, all of our interviewers are advanced MSW or PhD students in social work who have MSW. All had experience working in the past in domestic violence agencies and services and had been especially trained in that area and all were then trained by our project director, who had extensive experience with domestic violence. In addition

knowledge of domestic violence, knowledge of child maltreatment, knowledge of services available in the four cities where we were doing the interview and on sensitive interviewing, for example, knowing when to stop an interview. In addition because we were working with these four agencies we kept in close touch and had regular telephone conference calls with the agencies about any issues that might be arising among women who had been interviewed and some women called from the shelter and their workers that they worked with were there following the interview.

In terms of anonymity of participants one of the major issues for us was how to ask women about her child exposure without putting her at risk or putting here children at risk. And I'm going to talk a little bit about that in just a minute. But we had to consider whether we could keep certain data confidential if we knew the identity of our participant and if we couldn't than how it would reflect the accuracy of the data. So what we decided to do was conduct the interview anonymously. Women called an 800 number during certain hours to participate in the interview. So we never knew the identify of the women that we interviewed. Then I think risk of participation for women and children and this really underlies a lot of what I've been talking about. In all of these decisions that we made about

recruiting participants in terms of data collection, our over all guiding principle was to use procedures that minimized the risk of participation to women and children. And these decisions were always informed by ongoing conversations with directors and staff of all the domestic violence agencies that we were working with and one of the major dilemmas for us was our obligation as social workers, our legal, and ethical professional obligation to report child maltreatment and how that conflicted with confidentiality issues. Now again as I said, reporting laws vary from state to state and remember this is a four state study. Both in terms of time limits about what's reportable and in terms of who is mandated to report. So in some states like Texas which is one of the states that we interviewed in, everybody is a mandated reporter, everybody. There's no professional difference. A neighbor, a friend, a family member everybody under law is a mandated reporter. In other states only certain professionals are obligated to report by law. In some states in incidence that occurred any time in the past, 10 years ago, 20 years ago is reportable and that was true in California. Any reported child maltreatment no matter how long ago had to be reported if you were mandated reporter. In other states there are time limits like two years or three years any maltreatment that was know to occur in the last two or three years. So

the question for us was how we could ask mothers about their children's exposure to domestic violence which in some states and Minnesota is one of them, is now included as a reportable child maltreatment \_\_\_\_\_, the witnessing of domestic violence and about their child's victimization. And we determined that in some of the states that we were interviewing we would be required to report to child protection if a mother told us about children's exposure or victimization that was 10 or more years in the past. We also knew that in many of those same states child protection services would consider that past abuse to be low risk and wouldn't pursue the case anyway even if we reported it. Although that didn't relieve us of our legal obligation to report. So after a lot of discussions with the agencies, consultations with our institutional review board at the university, we decided to conduct anonymous interviews and we had women call us at a 1-800 number. We were still though faced with this dilemma if even if we were relieved of our legal obligation, in other words, we don't know people's identities so we can't report them, are we ethically obligated to report if there's some potential risk to the children and that was really one of the major ethical dilemmas for us. If we reported would we be putting the women at further risk of abuse between from the batterer for revealing it or at risk for being victimized and many people

feel that this is the case being victimized by a child protection system who would hold her responsible for the abuse of her child. If we didn't report were we putting children at further risk? So our resolution and again this was a balancing of ethical and legal responsibilities was to only ask about domestic abuse which occurred a year or more in the past. So by conducting anonymously, we were not legally obligated to report by only asking about past incidents, we decided that that relieved us of what we felt was an ethical obligation to report. That we were only asking about past abuse.

The anonymous interviews of course made it really difficult to pay women, which was another one of our values for participating. So we worked out a very complicated system of providing a code number to women who called in to be interviewed and she took that to the local domestic violence agency that was participating and they provided the payment which we sent to them in addition to the stipend to the agency we sent them the money for participant payment and there was no link between that code number and her identity at the agency level.

Finally, informed consent--procedures for informed consent had to be very, very carefully constructed and we had very specific, carefulness about a two page form of informed consent procedures that explain the study, describe the

asking of personal and sensitive questions, the availability of resources in the area and we also followed the end of the interview with a kind of debriefing of the woman after the interview and make sure that she's aware of the services. Now again many of the women that we interviewed actually called from the shelter and we felt very confident that they had a support system there. So, those are some of the issues that arose for us and how we attempted to deal with them. Balancing our desire for credible, scientific research findings and our value of conducting research in a way that would not put mothers and children at risk. In closing, I just want to say as we said in the beginning, I don't think there's any one right way to resolve these issues but I think that researchers need to discuss with the input of families of battered women, of the practice community of domestic violence agencies, they need to discuss and develop a framework for how they'll resolve the dilemmas that they're faced with and that framework really has to distinguish between our legal and ethical responsibilities because those are really two different things. It needs to carefully weigh the risks and the benefits. It sounds like I'm repeating what you said, the risks and benefits to people who participate in the research and to balance scientific and ethical responsibilities. I think many researchers who are doing research in this area

and I think speaking for Jeff Ellson and I who have been doing this, we really rely on a collaborative effort with agencies and with the women receiving services there to conduct research and therefore, have a real responsibility to you both in terms of how we conduct the research but also in the product of that research to conduct research in a way that doesn't put families at risk.

Do we have any comments, questions, burning issues you're all facing in the back. Why don't you, so we capture this, is you wouldn't mind just coming up here or taking this so that it gets on the tape.

... My name is Fern Hulk, I live here in Chicago area and work at Loyola University, so I'm a researcher and a physician and I found both perspectives extremely helpful. My question relates to something you both brought up which is the issue of \_\_\_\_\_ and do we have to surrender and what is a legal ramification. We're about to start a project where we're training medical students and residents to screen for women in the clinical setting for domestic violence and then make proper referrals and I'm sitting here thinking maybe I should just use all codes and not have any names coming to us because I am concerned about what we have to surrender and also what is the physician's obligation who identifies in his own or her own practice because I know as we try to recruit physicians into this project that's going

to be one of their questions as well. So I guess is comes from clinical data plus the research data and what are the legal ramifications for that?

... In terms of clinical data it's very, very clear that when students or researchers come in they need to report to the agency and the agency has to include it in their report. And most of the time we've had back not use the name but an initial saying this is a warrant here. And that has helped in terms of reporting but we have reported any of those findings that have been done by the researcher. The second point is that in terms of regular data we've tried to make sure that they are understanding all the issues from the agency and especially if they re going to the court, to any of the system, they need to think about themselves as a task member when they go, not as a researcher. I mean that's the only way we have done, yes.

... The government will provide these certificates of confidentiality of researchers when you're interviewing about illegal activities or activities that could be brought into a court. Now my understanding, and I know there's been a lot of writing in this area, I could refer you to some really interesting cross state which really is an important issues because states vary a lot, that those have not ever really been tested. In other words you may have a certificate of confidentiality so you can tell the people

that you are doing interviews with or collecting data from for research that you can keep what they tell you confidential. And this is particularly in the area of illegal activities like drug use or other crimes. But it's never been fully tested in court and it's not clear that it would protect the researcher in court. The mandated child abuse reporting is another whole issue and that again varies from state to state but you really need to know your own state's reporting law and what's included and that I think is more and more across the country going to become an issue because legislature are including language about children's witnessing in mandate reporting laws which I think the intent is to make it severe and hold batterers accountable but I think that the unintended consequence or maybe intended, hard to know, will be that women will be brought into child protection particularly if they're the only adult in the household or in the family with a legal relationship to the child. So that's a real important issue and you really have to know your state's reporting laws.

... My name is Kim \_\_\_\_\_, I'm with the Women's Rights and work at the Wesley Center for Women at Wesley College and my question I suppose is more leaning toward the issues of collaboration and ethics. I wonder if you both could talk about how you use or how researchers--from your different perspective--how the results of the research are

then used? I feel that it's very important to give back the results to the agencies and to the women so that you treat the women you interviewed not just as subjects but also as collaborators and peers and future activists if they're not activists all ready and whether you feel from your agency, whether you feel that makes a difference to get back the results and to have them written in a way that are not to jargony and academic so you can actually use it and maybe from a researcher perspective helping--maybe in some ways helping interpret the results so that it can be turned into concrete change or improvement of efforts?

... A couple of things that I can say we've done--both Jeff and I work for the Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse which has an electronic network and it also produces a newsletter which goes out around the country but we in understandable terms have described the results of our projects within that newsletter and it's available at that Web site. We then in the local agency that we're working with go and do presentations with the agency with the people who work there about the results of the study. Another project that we've just started is we've developed a research agency collaboration with the five major domestic violence agencies in our county with is Henderson County, which serves very diverse ethnically and racially diversified communities and we're developing a structure, in fact, we

just had a series of meetings with advocates and other service providers in the agencies to identify what the important issues are and again that's something that Ragina mentioned. Does anybody ever ask what we think the important issues are? And we started by an agreement with the directors of the agencies and then went to meetings with advocates and had asked for their identification of what are the important issues. And again we really focusing on particularly child witnesses or children exposed to domestic violence. That's been kind of the focus of this collaboration. And then we are developing a structure to then pursue funding based on what they see as a priority. The people within the agency will be fully collaborators in their research including authorship of any publications or reports that come out of it, etcetera and there will be an ongoing feedback loop along the way in terms of all the decisions about methods in the research.

... Clearly we would love to have information given to us without the jargons and very simplified so that is something that we have emphasized. Once the information is given and if it's not in the way we could interpret, we do interpret and we have a monthly newsletter so we have talked about that where we are, and sometimes the schools have also reported what work has been done. But there is also treatments that I found were very important in these reports.

One was the minimization of generalizations. Sometimes that is done and for that purpose the religion became very important and sometimes concepts of religion are used that are not there in recognizing the differences. So this fact we found that if data is collected part of it is if we have very concrete data emphasizing religious and no differences, we cannot go back to funders, we cannot go back to our own community and say that because that back fires on us, so some way of protecting that data too.

... I just wanted to take the prerogative of the Chair for a second because there's one resource that you might find interesting which is out of the organization that I work in there is--and this is more internationally focused but I think some of the lessons and examples are really fascinating. We're the \_\_\_\_\_ called the International Research Network on Violence Against Women and that's a group of advocates and researchers that come together every now it's every two years but we have reports and in those reports are fascinating examples of people grappling with how to--

(End of Side 2, Tape #204)